COTTON CHATS

DRAPER CORPORATION
HOPEDALE, MASSACHUSETTS

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DRAPER CORPORATION

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NORTHROP LOOM COSTS LESS PER POUND THAN OTHER GOOD MACHINERY

Henry Ford and his automobile stand before the world as preeminent examples of the benefit to the purchaser of quantity production, scientific application of all the latest ideas in manufacturing processes and supreme use of quantity purchase of raw material entering into the building of the machine.

Yet the Ford automobile, with less working parts, simpler mechanical problems and much less trying conditions to meet in the variety of demands on the part of the user, sells at a price 45% higher per pound than the Northrop automatic loom.

Ford builds duplicates by the hundred thousand. We build each order to the specifications of the customer, with special attention to meeting his range of weaves and the individual demands of his overseer of weaving.

We do not have the benefit of quantity production—that powerful lever so potent in reducing costs for the automobile manufacturer.

To the popular mind, the wizard of the automobile industry has blazed a flaming trail in the mechanical and productive field. Cost problems melt away under his soothing and skilful touch and the public gets the benefit —a low price for his machine.

The manufacturers of the Northrop loom have never tried to build the cheapest machine on the market. We never expect to do so.

Our aim has been to build a labor-saver and a money-saver for the use of the textile manufacturer—and incidentally to sell it at as low a price as is reasonable.

How well have we met this incidental aim? Comparisons are odious—but sometimes instructive.

ALL TEXTILE MACHINERY CHEAP

It is worthy of remark at the beginning of any discussion of this question that the prices of all textile machinery are low when compared with machinery used in other industries. A recent compilation of prices per pound of machines commonly used in the textile industry, machines used by the average machine shop and by agriculture, and of automobiles prove this graphically. Automobiles, especially the cheaper makes, give an interesting basis of comparison because they have all the advantages of quantity production.

A Revolving Top Flat Card, without clothing, or a Spooler cost about the same per pound as a sulky plow; a complete Spinning Frame or Draper Warper, only about half a cent a pound more than a disc harrow. Any one of them costs less than two-thirds of the price per pound of a planer, or from one-half to one-third the per pound cost of a lathe.

There is a reason for this low cost of textile machinery. It is found in the large number of machines of each kind required to equip a mill. Necessity has compelled the builder to find a way to design and build machines fully equal to the tasks they are called upon to perform and yet that can be sold at a comparatively low cost. Otherwise the textile industry, with its average of narrow profits, could not have lived and paid dividends on the investment that would have been required. Competition between builders has contributed; the real necessity of the industry has been the compelling force.

SOME COMPARATIVE PRICES

To many, however, the automatic loom has always seemed a high-priced machine, chiefly, we believe, because it has been measured by the price of the old common loom.

The figures show that machine tools, such as boring machines, drills, shapers, planers and lathes, range in price from 27 to 52 cents per pound; power machinery from 18 cents for steam boiler to 60 cents for steam turbine; agricultural machinery from 9 cents for a manure spreader to 33 cents for corn binder; automobiles from 24 cents for Ford touring car to $1.31 for Pierce Arrow.

The usual textile preparatory machines range from 14 to 19 cents a pound, with a few running 21, 23 and 28 cents.

The Northrop loom for cotton weaves from two to six shade, all models, fully equipped, ranges in price from 15 3-4 to 17 cents per pound; equipped with dobby and other extras for fancies, and our side cam loom for corduroys, from 17 to 18; our Worsted loom with heavy Worsted head, from 19 to 20 cents per pound.

Analyzing and comparing these figures, it appears that the fully equipped E Model, 40″ Northrop loom for two shade work costs the mill-owner less per pound than all but three or four of the preparatory machines he uses—and only a mere trifle above these; and the Northrop loom is many times more complicated as a mechanical proposition.

It has a greater number of working parts, more mechanisms are involved, and the mechanical problems to be met in design and construction are more numerous and complicated.

What the Northrop loom has done for the Textile industry, how it has been developed from the simple common loom to the highly finished product today, are well-told tales. How all this was accomplished without raising the price fixed in its early days until more than two years after the start of the world war is an equally interesting one which we hope to give you in a future Cotton Chats.

The increases in price that have come since 1916 were not caused by the vast improvement of the loom today over our earlier models. Improved methods of manufacture, devised by our own engineers and experts, have kept pace with our yearly improvement of the loom and enabled us for 20 years to hold to our fixed determination not to change the price.

The change finally came from world-wide conditions beyond our power to control. That the changes were not unreasonable, the above comparisons easily show.

Without regard to what it saves the manufacturer and speaking only from the machine-builder's standpoint, the Northrop Loom, quality and character of the machine considered, is still the cheapest machine sold to be used in the industries of this country.